

Virginia Latino Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Sunday, December 7, 2003

Members Present:

**Ms. Beatriz Amberman**  
Virginia Beach, VA

**Ms. Julia Torres Barden**  
Richmond, VA

**Mr. Ricardo A. Cabellos**  
Arlington, VA

**Mr. Ricardo Castaneda**  
Harrisonburg, VA

**Ms. Dannah Card**  
Pulaski, VA

**Mr. George Crespo**  
Powhatan, VA

**Mr. Pablo Julian Davis**  
Charlottesville, VA 22903

**Ms. Veronica L. Donahue**  
Amherst, VA

**Ms. Cecelia M. Espenosa**  
Falls Church, VA

**Ms. Tanya M. Gonzalez**  
Richmond, VA

**Mr. Esteban Nieto**  
Dayton, VA

**Ms. Gloria E. Ponce Rodriguez**  
Norfolk, VA

**Craig G. Schwartz**  
Richmond, VA

**Mr. Walter Tejada**  
Arlington, VA

**Mr. Andres Tobar**  
Arlington, VA

**Mr. Michel Zajur**  
Richmond, VA

**Ms. Indira Moran**  
Dale City, VA

Ex-Officio Members: Lou Arnatt, Chuck Mills, Leni Gonzalez, Philip Vasquez, Jenifer Nalli, Maribel Ramos

Absent: Ms. Mary C. Littreal , Jorge Figueredo

Public: Carlos Labiosa with HOLA, George Amberman (Beatriz' husband), Mark Elswick (Greensville), Julio Duran (Impacto newspaper)

Introduction by Chair Walter Tejada.

- Topic: Approval of minutes from previous meeting
- P. Davis: addition "Evaluation of Quality & Control of Interpretation Services, Statewide"
- T. Gonzalez: addition "increase implementation of Latino youth and mentoring programs"
- Minutes approved with changes

Chair W. Tejada addresses media coverage of VLAC:

- W. Tejada: read paragraph written by David Hallock(Governor' Policy Office)  
"The purpose of the Advisory Board is to provide advice and recommendations to the Governor. The recommendations of the Advisory Board are not binding in any way on the Governor or any agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Likewise, the opinions and actions of the individual members of the Advisory Board are the personal opinions and actions of each member and do not constitute an opinion or action by the Governor or any agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia. No board member shall purport to speak for the Governor or any agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia."/ Media could be greatest ally, if you don't know the answer to the question, tell them if you can call back and then decide with Commission members for an appropriate answer. Call whoever knows subject matter and check your facts. Find out if the reporter has contacted any other member of the Commission.
- A. Tobar: acquire factual data about our communities and share within the Commission, it would be helpful to get the percent of Latino immigrants from the JLARC study.
- C. Espenosa: reporter may sometimes not want to quote you directly but instead as a source. Reporter may want background information- be clear on what they are asking and what your response is.
- A. Tobar: when getting approval from the Commission re: media inquiry, also contact vice-chair, in case chair is not available/ Refer them to speak with the chair or vice-chair.

- E. Nieto: shared his experience at his Company – media always contacts them on various issues. Good idea to have W. Tejada as P.R. person.
- L. Arnatt: usually reporter doesn't have an immediate deadline and can e-mail you their question.
- J. Barden: if media wants to push for you to say something you don't feel comfortable saying – contact two sources to find out what needs to be said to media/ Develop guidelines as to how to respond to media.
- W. Tejada: always keep in mind a reporter may want a controversial story.
- B. Amberman: make sure you make clear what point of view you want to get through and not to divert.

Chair, W. Tejada – discussion on execution on remainder of agenda:

- W. Tejada: information on what will be sent to the Governor. Interim Report- assign room, where every committee is located and went over specific Committees: Identification Issues, Translation & Language Issues, Business, Law Enforcement, Healthcare Issues, Education and Hispanic Representation.
- B. Amberman: in selecting topics, what are the concerns? Grouping concerns and issues. Focus in on problem and recommendation. Outline benefits and drawbacks of each approach. Format documents, each team facilitator and note taker, come back to large Commission and share the recommendations.
- W. Tejada: look at bullets of minutes of November 14<sup>th</sup> meeting, all pieces of each group will be put into larger document to present December 15<sup>th</sup>. (1 hour for exercise)
- C. Espenosa: give Law Enforcement group 20 minutes to go to a different Committee first.
- J. Barden: attended Congressional Hispanic Institute Conference and brought back resources.
- B. Amberman: addressed the report by VACOLAO and JLARC.
- P. Davis: Language access group to start 20 minutes later because members were part of other Committees.
- W. Tejada: 1:06pm split into Committees and get back by 2pm.

Recognized: Delegate Adam Ebbin

Co-Chair B. Amberman takes the floor to discuss Identification issues.

- B. Amberman: thanked all of those that brought information. Matricula Consular (MC) issued only to Mexican and Guatemalan citizens. M.C. not a document that by any means says that a person has the right to stay in the U.S. Everyone has the fundamental right to identify himself or herself. MC has invisible security features, this document can't be acquired by just anyone. Statistics of where MC has been accepted until November 2002 – 13 states that now accept MC in order to obtain driver's license. Economic side – large # of immigrants carrying large sums of \$.
- A. Tobar: concern that issue and recommendations went in too much depth.
- W. Tejada: Driver's License/Legal Presence – being implemented on January 2004. Immigrants will be given a #9(identifying those here on a limited visa)
- P. Vasquez: thanked W. Tejada and R. Castaneda for their presence in the taskforce

- W. Tejada: make sure law is applied fairly/ no special treatment to any particular group.
- A. Tobar: asked whether these recommendations will be included in report or will it be researched.
- P. Davis: due to time can we pass draft through e-mails instead of finalizing then?
- A. Tobar: concerned with submitting to Governor to allow use of MC because it may not be taken positive.
- B. Amberman: there is a Representative stating they want to oppose use of MC and do we want to approach issue now or wait until legislation is pushed/ We should take a stance and be prepared with action.
- J. Barden: 2 countries only issue, will this put other countries from Latin America at a deficit?
- L. Gonzalez: only 2 countries issue MC all other countries issue National ID's.
- W. Tejada: push to find out whether or not Governor is willing to support MC's/ we don't want to wait to react after legislation is passed.
- P. Davis: concerned that issues is so urgent, does it need to be voted on now?
- W. Tejada: all wording will be distributed, importance of what is being highlighted as an issue and recommendation

Member, Pablo Davis presented on Translation/Language Access Committee:

- P. Davis: Issues and Need – language access a matter of human dignity, vital health and legal consequences. Title VI requirements. Concerns at quality and consistency; translation providers/agencies don't have to be certified in VA. Confidentiality matters, exploitation is frequent. Interpreting and translation a profession. What we can do? Recommendations to Governor, education and outreach to community. Just because you speak Spanish doesn't mean you are qualified to translate. Educate community about rights. Liaison with Federal/ help coordinate translation across the state/ legal issues/ statewide network of translators/ Reach all communities – some efforts overlap, voter rights, lobbying for certain trades.
- L. Gonzalez: Are you recommending a statewide clearinghouse?
- P. Davis: explore feasibility of network.
- E. Nieto: ask Department of Labor what constitutes a profession/ certain requirements for a certain profession.

Member, Lou Arnatt presented on Business Committee:

- L. Arnatt: explore ways that minority vendors have access, state to provide more resources/ Import & export between Latin America/ trade and professional certification were addressed
- A. Tobar: no data where Latinos stand but will explore possibilities of forums to address Latino Business community throughout the State.
- M. Zajur: one on one contact with Business leaders within agencies

Member Cecelia Espenoza presented on Law Enforcement Committee:

- C. Espenoza: increase outreach to the Latino community/ Ensure language access of crime security/ Hotline for those officers on street to call and be able to communicate/ Facilitate relation between Latino community and Lat enforcement (hotline to report

crime)/ Community forums, dialogues/ Support services for victims of crime, explain the purpose of going to court/ Emerging issues of youth- gangs, truancy, abuse & neglect/ Evaluate whether local and state police have the ability to take on further responsibilities

- E. Nieto: is mental health related to crime prevention?
- R. Castaneda: address youth issues beyond law enforcement.

Member Tanya Gonzalez presented for Healthcare Committee:

- T. Gonzalez: across the board lack of adequate dental care, high percentage of uninsured, accessibility of health treatments/ Title VI concerns/ ID issues-certain health benefits unavailable because no identification/ lack of education of services available/ Insurance directories – no inclusion of bilingual providers/ Bilingual and bi-cultural psychologists, counselors etc./ Cultural based practices, remedies, health provider needs to be aware of specific practices.
- Public, Mr. Amberman: list of provider directories exists and lists providers that are bilingual

Member Veronica Donahue presented for Education Committee:

- V. Donahue: VA Department of Education needs to gather and disseminate better data and resources on Latino students and ESL programs for K-16(p. 99 JLARC study) and also adults/ improve eligibility for federal grants/ how many school divisions allocate local funds for ESL programs? How many licensed teachers? / Facilitate access to higher education regardless of documentation.
- R. Castaneda: NCLB/ teacher quality, training and education for school personnel/ parent education advocacy/ uniform statistical information to apply for Federal grants/ ESL programs - # of divisions w/ ESL programs, accountability of programs, # of teachers appropriate to participation, inadequate support for students/ Create more institutions as Hispanic serving institutions
- V. Donahue: services to migrant students/ address why migrant children should be included.
- M. Zajur: Hispanic population highest % of dropout – 35% dropout rate
- R. Castaneda: urging state to provide liaison on state level/ ESL guidelines.
- C. Schwartz: bonafide infrastructure/ tangible
- B. Amberman: Hampton roads- sensitivity training for teachers/ students being called names- in her area providing forums and this could spread to other areas.
- C. Espenosa: model students that are doing well and excel / highlight successful Latino children
- G. Rodriguez: DREAM Act opens doors to students/ 4% of our population w/ Bachelor's degree, higher education- use all strategies to reach students.
- V. Donahue: DOE budge limited and time limitations/ fill gaps- need to reach students at an early stage.

Member Julia Torres Barden presented on behalf of Hispanic Representation Committee:

- J. Barden: lack of Hispanic representation on a state level/ nobody to remind General Assembly about the thriving Latino community/ No Latino Delegate or Senators in VA- compare with other states/ Best practices guidelines – to interview those elected

Latino officials/ Bi-partisan perspective, how they look at outreaching to the Latino communities.

Chair Walter Tejada reminded everyone that language for each Committee to be included in the Interim report to the Governor should be submitted to Maribel Ramos by 12pm, Tuesday, December 14, 2003. Include sources of reference. Can be e-mailed or mailed.

Format of information sent to be included in Interim report:

- Introduction/ Word document/ Paragraph form/ submitted electronically and mailed with signature.

Chair Walter Tejada- set up next meeting

J. Barden: suggested we hold a forum along w/next meeting

M. Zajur: VHCC hosting a meet and greet with legislators on February 25<sup>th</sup>

W. Tejada: February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2pm-5pm in Richmond

G. Rodriguez: recommended we have meetings in Virginia Beach

W. Tejada: following meetings were scheduled:

- April 2' 2004 at 2pm in Charlottesville, VA
- June 4' 2004 at 2pm in VA Beach
- August 6, 2004 at 2pm place to be determined
- September 10, 2004 at 2pm place to be determined